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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/033,656	12/27/2001	Weimin Li	MICRON.076DV1	7957

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EXAMINER

BROPHY, JAMIE LYNN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2822

DATE MAILED: 01/14/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/033,656

Applicant(s)

LI, WEIMIN

Examiner

J. L. Brophy

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 October 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☒ The proposed drawing correction filed on 25 October 2002 is: a) ☒ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

This office action is in response to the amendment filed 10/25/02.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in-

(1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or
(2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a).

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yau et al (6,072,227).

Yau et al teach an IC comprising a first conductive element 306 providing a first electrical path of the circuit;

A second conductive element 308 providing a second electrical path of the circuit; and

A unitary insulating layer 300 directly contacting and sandwiched between the first and second conductive elements 306, 308, the insulating layer comprising polysiloxane, consisting essentially of silicon, oxygen, carbon and hydrogen and incorporating carbon therein and having a dielectric constant of less than about 3.2 (col. 5, lines 40-41),

Wherein the insulating layer has a carbon content of between about 5% and 20% relative to a silicon content (col. 5, lines 38-39), and

Wherein the conductive elements 306, 308 comprise metal runners.

See, for example Fig. 6A-6E and accompanying text.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yau et al in view of Gardener et al (5,869,379).

Yau et al teach an IC that comprises a conformally deposited insulating layer 300 with a low dielectric constant. However, Yau et al do not teach that the insulating layer may be used as a sidewall spacer.

Gardener et al teaches a transistor with a sidewall spacer made of a low dielectric constant material (col. 2, lines 13-19) for the purpose of reducing the capacitive coupling between the gate conductor and adjacent source/drain regions.

Since Yau et al and Gardener et al are both from the same field of endeavor, the purpose disclosed by Gardener et al would have been recognized in the pertinent art of Yau et al.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the method disclosed by Yau et al by using the low

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dielectric constant insulating layer as a sidewall spacer in a transistor structure because a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have been motivated to lower the dielectric constant of the sidewall spacer in order to reduce capacitive coupling between the gate conductor and adjacent source/drain regions (see Gardener et al, col. 2, lines 21-25).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 10/25/02 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that Yau does not teach a unitary insulating layer directly contacting and sandwiched between conductive elements within an integrated circuit. Applicant argues that the Yau reference teaches a plurality of consecutive dielectric layers between metal layers, while the claimed invention recites the deposition of only a single layer. However, the claims do not preclude more than one layer between the conductive elements. In the Yau reference, layer 300 (Fig. 6A) is a unitary layer that directly contacts and is formed between conductive elements 306, 308 and 310. The claims do not recite that there can be only one layer filling the gap between the conductive elements.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to J. L. Brophy whose telephone number is (703) 308-6182. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00-5:00).


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Amir Zarabian can be reached on (703) 308-4905. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9318 for regular communications and (703) 872-9319 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

J.L.B.

jlb

January 12, 2003


AMIR ZARABIAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3800